

**Grossmont College Project Success Learning Communities
Linked-Course Assignments and Activities**

<u>Linked Course Titles</u>	<u>Actual Weekly Class Hours</u>	<u>Credits and Numbers Credit</u>
Principles of College Reading (110R) Instructor: Sue Jensen	3.5	3 units Associate Degree Credit
College Composition (110W) Instructor: Joan Ahrens	3	3 units Associate Degree Credit

Description of Student Level

Students in 110/110R have a reading level between 7th and 13th grade level. Some of the students test into the course, and others enroll in the course after taking English 98/98R. As a result, skill levels can vary. Typically, students are strong literal readers, but are less able to analyze what they are reading and think critically about the ideas and concepts presented.

Linked Assignments

Sources

The Kite Runner, by Khaled Hosseini
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, by Mark Twain
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, a reading on CD
“The Lowest Animal,” by Mark Twain

Objective(s):

After completing the assignment, students will be able to:

1. Develop critical thinking skills by analyzing, comparing, and contrasting the social, political, and historical contexts of the two texts.
2. Develop a list of the traits/characteristics of the main characters in both texts.
3. Develop a list of the conflicts faced by the main characters as well as the resolutions of those conflicts, again in both texts.
4. Analyze and verbalize the major themes of the text.
5. Interpret events to support identified themes.
6. Write responses in a journal to both literal and inferential questions about the text.
7. Write paragraphs with topic sentences, and supporting information gathered from the text.
8. Synthesize information to form and present arguments in thesis driven essays and then support these arguments with relevant, accurate examples from both texts.

Description

In the Reading Class, students are assigned:

1. *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini -- The students research and present information on the continuing conflict between the Sunni and Shi’a Muslims as well as the history of civil unrest in Afghanistan. Through class discussions and short answer quizzes, the students contemplate how the social/political/historical forces influence Amir’s choices, particularly his decision not to aid Hassan in his time of need. The students are assigned a specific number of chapters each week. They are required to respond to literal and inferential questions about the readings. Prior to the first journal assignments, students are shown models of how to respond to inferential questions. Responses must have

topic sentences and well developed supporting points that include secondary and tertiary information. Their interpretations must cite information from the text that they in turn interpret to support the topic sentence. As a class, students prepare a response to one of the questions to reinforce the process and the format of the response. These questions are designed to help promote critical thinking and prepare students for the essay they will be writing in the composition course.

2. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain --Students are introduced to the text with the reading of a short essay by Mark Twain, "The Lowest Animal." They discuss the themes of the article and interpret Twain's views about the nature of man. Students are involved in weekly discussions of the chapters assigned for that week. Prior to the discussions, students listen to selected excerpts from the readings on the DVD. These excerpts are scenes that help illustrate the change that will take place in Huck in respect to his view of Jim. Discussions focus on analyzing how each of these events accumulate and ultimately cause Huck to reevaluate his beliefs about slavery and Jim's humanity. The students discuss the following key questions: What is the author's view of humanity? What is the author's view of the societal institutions that affect the major characters? Who is the moral center of the text? Simultaneously, students compare and contrast the traits of Huck to Amir, in *The Kite Runner*.

In the Writing Class,

1. *The Kite Runner* unit – Students write a causal analysis focusing on the following questions: Why is Amir afraid to be Hassan's true friend? Why does Amir constantly test Hassan's loyalty? Why does he resent Hassan? In their analysis, students must address how Amir and Hassan's social and familial responsibilities affect their relationship.
2. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* unit—Students practice paragraphing skills by writing short answer responses using a variety of rhetorical strategies. Students are asked to consider the novel in light of what they have learned about the way social/political forces shape Amir's identity and influence his choices in *The Kite Runner*. They are asked to consider how similar forces shape Huck as well. The focus question for classroom discussions and prewriting exercises is: "Why is it that Huck, an uneducated, poor child, is able to help Jim while Amir, an educated and wealthy child, is unable to help Hassan?"
3. The students develop a comparison/contrast essay in response to the focus question listed above or to another version of this prompt which asks how the social/political forces of their circumstances influence both Amir and Huck's choices when it comes to supporting their counterparts Hassan and Jim. In preparation for this assignment, students analyze student essays from previous semesters as well as essays applicable to the forms and rhetorical modes they will be replicating in their own writing about the novels.

In the Reading and Writing Class,

Class discussions initiated in the reading class are continued during the writing class and vice versa. Both instructors provide supplemental reading material (historical texts, newspaper articles, etc.) to help students develop a better understanding of the various contexts in which the novels are set. Both instructors require that students utilize the vocabulary studied in reading in all of their assignments.